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Dr. Hammond's
E X P O S I T I O N

Of G A L. vi. 15.

*For in CHRIST JESUS, neither Circumcision
availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but
a NEW CREATURE.*

A N D

Bishop *Hopkins's*
E X P O S I T I O N

Of J O H N iii. 5.

*Except a Man be born of Water, and of the
Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of
G O D.*

L O N D O N:

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Dr. *Hammond's*
 E X P O S I T I O N
 O F G A L. vi. 15.

*For in CHRIST JESUS neither Circumcision
 availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a NEW
 CREATURE.*

AMONGST all other Incumbrances and Delays in our Way to Heaven, there is none that doth so clog, so disadvantage and backward us, and *in fine*, so cast us behind in our Race, as a Contentedness in a *formal Worship* of God, an Acquiescence and resting satisfied in *outward Performances*.—

They that stand only on a fair specious Outside, and think all the Sap and Life of Religion lies in the Bark, they do *this* and *this*; these will have you *circumcised*, and constrain you to a many burthenfome Ceremonies; measuring out Religion to you by the Weight, *thus much* is required of you to do.—In brief, the Apostle here shews the Unprofitableness of all these, and sets up the *inward Sanctity* and Renewedness of Heart against them all, as the only Thing that will stand us in stead, and appear to be of any Weight in the Balance of the Sanctuary.—The Particle *but* in the Front of my Text is *exclusive* and *restrictive*, it excludes every Thing in the World from pretending to avail any Thing, from being believed to do us any Good, For by *Circumcision* the Church of the *Jews*, and by *Uncircumcision* the whole Profession of Christian Religion being understood, when he saith neither of these availeth any

any Thing he forcibly implies that *all other Means, all Professions, all Observances*, that Men think or hope to get Heaven by are to no Purpose, and that by Consequence it exactly restrains to the *new Creature*; there it is to be had, and no where else. The Substance of all the Apostle's Discourse, and the Groundwork of mine shall be this one *Aphorism, Nothing is efficaciously available to Salvation, but a renewed, regenerated Heart*. For the Opening of which we will examine by Way of Doctrine, wherein this *new Creature* consists, and then, by Way of Use, the Necessity of that, and Unprofitableness of all other plausible pretending Means. And first *wherein this new Creature consists*.

Now that you may conceive wherein it consists, how this new Man is brought forth in us, by whom it is conceived, and in what Womb 'tis carried, I will require no more of you than to observe and understand with me what is meant by the ordinary Phrase in our Divines, a new Principle, or inward Principle of Life, and that you shall do briefly thus. A Man's Body is naturally a sluggish, unactive, motionless, heavy Thing, not able to stir or move the least animal Motion without a Soul to enliven it; without that 'tis but a Carcass as you see at Death; when the Soul is separated from it, it returns to be but a Stock or Lump of Flesh; the Soul bestows all Life and Motion on it, and enables it to perform any Work of Nature. Again, the Body and Soul together considered in relation to somewhat above their Power and Activity, are as impotent and motionless as before the Body without the Soul. Set a Man to remove a Mountain, and he will heave perhaps to obey your Command, but in Event will do no more towards the displacing it, than a Stone in the Street could do; but now let an omnipotent Power be annexed to this Man, let a supernatural Spirit be joined to this Soul, and then will it be able to overcome the proudest, stoutest difficulty in Nature. You have heard in the primitive Church of a Grain of Faith removing Mountains, and believe me, all Miracles are not yet out-dated. The Work of Regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual Life on one dead in Trespasses and Sins; the making of a Carcass walk, the natural Old-man to spring again, and move spiritually, is as great a Miracle as that. Now the Soul in that it produces Life and Motion, the Exercise of Life in the Body is called a Principle, that is, a Spring or Fountain of Life, because all comes from it; in like Manner, that
which

which moves this Soul, and enables it do that which naturally it could not ; that which gives it a new Life, which before it lived not ; furnisheth it with spiritual Powers to quell and subdue all carnal Affections which before were too hard for it ; this, I say, is called properly an inward Principle ; and an inward, because it is inwardly and secretly infused, doth not only outwardly assist us as an Auxiliary at a dead Lift, but is sown and planted in our Hearts as a Soul to the Soul, to elevate and enable it above itself ; hath its Seat and Palace in the regenerate Heart, and there exercises Dominion, executes Judgment, and that is commonly either by Prison or Banishment, it either fetters, or else expells all insolent rebellious Lusts. Now the new Principle, by which not the Man, but the new Man the Christian lives, is, in a Word, the Spirit of God, which unites itself to the regenerate Heart, so that now he is said to be a godly Man, a spiritual Man, from the God, from the Spirit, as before a reasonable Man, from the Soul, from the Reason that informed, and ruled in him ; which is noted by that Distinction in Scripture betwixt the Regenerate and Unregenerate, exprest by a natural or animal, and a spiritual Man.—But now the regenerate Man which hath more than a Soul, God's Spirit to enliven him, he is of another Rank, a spiritual Man, nay, only he properly a Christian, because he lives by Christ, *He lives, yet not he, but Christ liveth in him,* Gal. ii. 20.

This being premised, that now ye know what this new Creature is, he that lives and moves by a new Principle, all that is behind will be clearest presented to you by resolving these four Questions ; *First*, Whence it comes ; *Secondly*, Where it lodges ; *Thirdly*, When it enters ; *Fourthly*, What Work it performs there.

To the *First*, Whence it comes ; The Answer is clear and punctual *John* iii. 3, *from above*, from whence comes every Good, and especially, every perfect Gift, *James* i. 17.

To the *Second* Question, Where it lodges ; my Answer is, in the Heart of Man, in the whole Soul ; not in the Understanding, not in the Will, (a Distinction of Faculties invented by Philosophers, to puzzle and perplex Divines, and put them to needless Shifts) but, I say, in the whole Soul, ruling and guiding it in all its Actions, enabling it to understand and will spiritually ; conceived, I say, and born in the Soul, but nursed and fed, and increased into a perfect Stature by the

outward Organs and Actions of the Body, for by them it begins to express and shew itself in the World, by them the Habit is exerted and made perfect; the Seed shot up into an Ear; the Spring improved to Autumn, when the Tongue discourses, the Hands act, the Feet run the Way of God's Commandments. — In brief, 'tis one Principle within us, doth every Thing that is holy, believes, repents, hopes, loves, obeys, and what not? And, consequently, is effectually in every Part of Body and Soul, sanctifying it to work spiritually, as an holy Instrument of a divine invisible Cause, that is, the Holy Ghost that is in us and throughout us.

For the *Third* Question, When this new Principle enters; first, you are to know, that comes into the Heart in a three-fold Condition; first as an * *Harbinger*; 2dly as a private Guest; 3dly as an Inhabitant or House-keeper. As 'tis an *Harbinger*, so it comes to fit and prepare us for itself; trims up, and sweeps, and sweetens the Soul, that it may be readier to entertain him when it comes to reside; and that he doth (as the ancient Gladiators had their *Arma prælusoria*) by skirmishing with our Corruptions before he comes to give them a Pitch-battle; he brandishes a flaming Sword about our Ears; and as by a Flash of Lightning, gives us a Sense of a dismal hideous State; and so somewhat restrains us from Excess and Fury; first, by a momentary Remorse, then by a more lasting, yet not putrifying Flame, the Spirit of Bondage. In sum, every Check of Conscience, every Sigh for Sin, every Fear of Judgment, every Desire of Grace, every Motion or Inclination toward spiritual Good, be it never so short winded, is † *Prælude Spiritus*, a kind of *John Baptist* to Christ, something that God sent before to prepare the Ways of the Lord.

Secondly, When this Spirit comes a Guest to lodge with us, then is he said to enter; but till by Actions and frequent obliging Works, he makes himself known to his Neighbours, as long as he keeps his Chamber, till he declare himself to be there, so long he remains a private secret Guest: And that's called the Introduction of the Form, that makes a Man to be truly regenerate; when the Seed is sown in his Heart, when the Habit is infused; and that is done sometimes discernibly, sometimes not discernably, but seldom; as when *Saul* was called in the Midst of his Madness, *Acts* ix. he was certainly

* *Forerunner to prepare a Lodging.* † *An Harbinger.*

tainly able to tell a Man the very Minute of his Change, of his being made a New Creature. Thus they which have long lived in an enormous antichristian Course, do many Times find themselves stricken on a sudden, and are able to date their Regeneration, and tell you punctually how old they are in the Spirit. Yet because there be many Preparations to this Spirit, which are not this Spirit; many Presumptions in our Hearts false grounded; many Tremblings and Jealousies in those that have it; great Affinity between Faith natural and spiritual; seeing 'tis a Spirit that thus enters, and not as it did light on the Disciples in a bodily Shape, 'tis not an easy Matter for any one to define the Time of his Conversion. Some may guess somewhat nearer than others, as remembring a sensible Change in themselves; but in a Word, the surest discerning of it, is in its working, not at its entring. I may know that now I have the Spirit better than at what Time I came to it.

The third Condition in which this Spirit comes unto our Hearts, is as an Inhabitant or House-keeper. “ * The Spirit, “ faith *Austin*, first is in'us, then dwells in us; before it dwells, “ it helps to believe: When it dwells, it helps and perfects, “ and improves our Faith, and accomplishes it with all other “ concomitant Graces.” So I say here, the Spirit is said then to inhabit and keep House in us; not as soon as it is entertained and received, but when it breaks forth into Acts, and declares itself before all Men, *when Men see our good Works, and glorify our Father*, Mat. v. 16. Before we were said to live in the Spirit, now to walk, as you shall see the Phrases used distinctly, Gal. v. 25. To walk, that is to go about conspicuously in the Sight of all Men; breaking forth into Works, (as the Sun after the Dispersions of a Mist or Cloud) whereby all Men see and acknowledge his Faith and Obedience, and find their own evil Ways reprehended and made manifest by his Good, as is noted in the 13th Verse, *All Things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the Light*. † Semblable to which is that of the Atheists repining at the godly Man, *Wisdom ii. 14. He is made to reprove our Thoughts*. Thus is the third Query resolv'd also, when this inward Principle enters. First, it comes as an *Harbinger*, in every outward Restraint by which God keeps us from sinning. Secondly, it enters as a

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Guest

* *Epist. 105 ad Xystum.*† *Like.*

Guest in some Season or other ; and lastly, it comes and dwells with us, and shews itself in Works.—

To the last Query, What Works it performs, the Answer shall be brief ; every Thing that may be called spiritual, Faith, Repentance, Charity, Hope, Self-denial, and the rest ; but these not promiscuously, or in an Heap altogether, but by a wise Dispensation, in Time and by Degrees. The Soul being enabled by this inward Principle, is equally disposed to the producing of all these, and as Occasions do occur, doth actually perform and produce them ; so that in my Conceit that Question concerning the Priority of Repentance or Faith, is not either of such Moment or Difficulty, as is by some Disputers pretended. The Seeds of them both are at one Time planted in the Soul ; and then there is no Faith in any Subject but there is Repentance also ; nor Repentance without Faith. So that where it is said, Without Faith 'tis impossible to please God in any Thing else, 'tis true ; but argues no necessary Precedence of it before other Graces, for the Habits of them all are of the same Age in us, and then also will it be as true, that without Repentance, or without Love, Faith itself cannot please God ; for if it be truly acceptable Faith, there is both Repentance and Love in the same Womb to keep it Company. Thus are we wont to say that only Faith justifieth, but not Faith alone ; And the Reason these Promises in Scripture are made sometimes to one Grace precisely, sometimes to another, is because they are all at once rooted in the Man ; in their Habits chain'd together inseparably. Faith saves every Man that hath it, and yet the believing'st Man under Heaven shall not be saved without Charity. Charity hides a Multitude of Sins, and yet the charitablest Man in the World shall never have his Score cross'd without Repentance. A Catalogue of these Fruits of the Spirit you may at your Leisure make up to yourselves for your Trial, out of the fifth to the *Galatians*, from the † 22d Verse, and 1 *Peter* i. 5. All these Graces together though some belonging to one, some to another Faculty of the Soul, are yet all at once conceived in it ; at once begin their Life in the Heart, though

† *Gal. v. 22, 23. But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance ; against such there is no Law.*

1 *Pet. i. 5. Who are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.*

though one be perhaps sooner ready to walk abroad, and shew itself in the World than another.

By what hath been said 'tis plain enough (though it might be much more amplified) that Grace is of absolute Necessity to the Performance of any holy Work acceptable to God; that without it whatsoever is done in spiritual Matters is carnal, not indeed spiritual, but equivocally and absurdly so called. The natural Man's Desires of Heaven, are not Desires of Heaven; his Faith no Faith; his Believing of the Scripture, Infidelity, because he doth not apply them particularly to himself to obey them. In sum, when he prays, hopes, or gives Alms, he does somewhat indeed, and 'tis well done of him; but he doth not truly either pray, or hope, or give Alms, there is some Carnality in them that hath poisoned them, and quite altered the Complexion, the Constitution, and inward Qualities of the Work. And then indeed how impatient should every Christian be of this † *Coloquintida* within him? There's *mors in ollé*, as the Prophet once spake, that's *Death in the Pot*, that so infects and kills every Thing that comes out of it. How should we abhor, and loath, and detest this old Leaven that so besowres all our Actions! This Heathenism of unregenerate carnal Nature, which makes our best Works so unchristian?

Having learnt what this new Creature is, and how absolutely necessary to a Christian; O let us not defer one Minute longer to examine our States, whether we are yet renewed or no; and by the Acts which we daily perform, observe whether the sanctifying Habit be as yet infused into our Souls. If the Grounds of our best Duties, that which moves us in our holiest Actions, be found upon Search to be but carnal; if a careful religious Education, Custom of the Place which we live in, Fear of human Laws, nay, perhaps a good soft tender Disposition and the like, be the Things that make thee love God and perform holy Duties, and not any inward Principle of Sanctity within thee, I counsel thee to think better of thine Estate, and consider whether the like Motives had it so happened that thou hadst been born and brought up in *Turky*, might not have made thee worship *Mahomet*. I would be sorry to be rigid, I fear thou wilt find they might: Well then, a new Course must be taken, all thy former hea-

B 3

then,

† *The Fruit of a wild Gourd, of a bitter Taste*

then, carnal, or at best good moral Life, all thy formal Performances, the best of thy natural Desires, must be content to be rank'd here with Circumcision and Uncircumcision availing nothing, there is no Trust or Confidence to be placed on these *Egyptian Staves of Reed*, *Isa. xxx. 6.* And then if thou wilt not live heedless for ever, if ever thou mean'st to move or walk, or do any Thing, you must to that Creator of Spirits and Lover of Souls, and never leave soliciting, 'till he hath breathed another Breath in your Nostrils, another Soul into your Soul. You must lay yourself at his Feet, and with all the Violence and Rhetorick, and Humility, that these Wants will prompt thee to, woo, and importune the holy Spirit to overshadow thee; to conceive all holy Graces spiritually in thee; and if thou canst not suddenly receive a gracious Answer, that the Holy Ghost will come in unto thee, and lodge with thee this Night; yet learn so much Patience from thy beggarly Estate, as not to challenge him at thy own Times, but comfortably to wait his Leisure. There is Employment enough for thee in the while to prepare the Room against his Coming, to make Use of all his common Graces, to cleanse and reform thy foul Corruptions, that when the Spirit comes it may find thee swept and garnish'd. All the outward Means which God hath afforded thee, he commands thee to make use of, and will require it at thy Hands in the best Measure, even before thou art regenerate, tho' thou sin in all thy unregenerate Performances, for want of inward Sanctity, yet 'tis better to have obeyed imperfectly, than not at all: The first is Weakness, the other desperate Presumption; the first material partial Obedience, the second total Disobedience. Yet whilst thou art preparing, give not over praying, they are Acts very † competent; thou may'st do them both together. Whilst thou art a fortifying these little Kingdoms within thee, send these Embassadors abroad for Help, that thou may'st be capable of it when it comes. But above all Things be circumspect, watch and observe the Spirit, and be perpetually ready to receive its Blasts, let it never have breathed on thee in vain; let thine Ear be forever open to its Whisperings: If it should pass by thee either not heard, or not understood, 'twere a Loss that all the Treasures upon Earth could not repair; and for the most Part you know it comes
not

not in the Thunder. Christ seldom speaks so loud now a-days as he did to *Saul*, Acts ix. 'Tis in a soft still Voice, and I will not promise you that Men that dwell in a Mill, that are perpetually engaged in worldly loud Employments, or that Men asleep, shall ever come to hear of it. The Sum of all my Exhortations is, after Examination, to cleanse, and pray, and watch; carefully to cleanse thyself, incessantly to pray, and diligently to watch for the Sun of Righteousness, when he shall begin to dawn, and rise and shine in thy Heart by Grace.

And do thou, O holy Lord, work this whole Work in us; prepare us by thy outward, perfect us by thy inward Graces; awaken us out of the Darknes of Death, and plant a new Seed of holy Light and Life in us: Infuse into our heathen Hearts a Christian Habit of Sanctity, that we may perform all spiritual Duties of Holiness; that we may glorify thee here by thy Spirit, and be glorify'd with thee by thy Christ hereafter.

The Nature and Necessity of REGENERATION; Or the NEW-BIRTH.

By Bishop HOPKINS.

JOHN iii. 5.

Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a Man be born of WATER and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

THE former Part of this Chapter in which Division these Words fall, reports the Conference that passed between Christ and *Nicodemus*. Their Discourse is concerning the great Mystery of the New-Birth, of which this Night-disciple had but a dark and Midnight Conception.—*Can a Man*, says he, *be born when he is old; can he enter the second Time into his Mother's Womb and be born?* No doubt but this learned Rabbi thought he had brought a gravelling Instance against this new Doctrine of the New-Birth; such ignorant Pieces are the most Wise and Learned, when they attempt by Reason to search out those mysterious Effects of God's Spirit, which cannot be known otherwise than by Illumination and Experience: Our Saviour therefore in the Words of the Text takes off this gross and ill-conceited Objection, and tells him that he speaks not of a carnal, but of a spiritual Regeneration and Birth, whereby we are begotten again to a lively Hope, and are made the Children of God, and so silenceth those impertinent Impossibilities on which *Nicodemus* insisted. *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he can in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God.* These Words are a Description of a Christian's New-Birth, which is here set forth by the efficient Cause

Cause of it, Water and the Spirit; and also by the absolute Necessity of it unto eternal Life.—To be born of Water and the Spirit, may denote to us the Manner of the Spirit's Proceeding in the Work of Regeneration, *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit*, that is, except he be renewed by the Holy Ghost, working as Water, leaving the same Effect upon the Soul, in cleansing and purifying of it from sinful Defilements, as Water doth upon the Body in washing off contracted Dirt and Filth: Nor indeed is this Manner of Expression strange to the holy Scripture; for *John Baptist*, *Mat. iii. 11.* speaking of Christ, tells them, *that he should baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*; that is, he should baptize them with the Holy Ghost working as Fire; for as Fire eats out and consumes the Rust and Dross of Metals; so those that are baptized with the Spirit, are as it were plunged into that heavenly Flame, whose searching Energy devours all their Dross, Tin, and base Ally. So then here also to be born of Water and of the Spirit, may be no more than to be born of the Spirit, purifying the Soul, even as Water purifies the Body; so variously is the Efficiency of the Holy Ghost in the Work of Regeneration expressed in Scripture Language, it consumes our Dross as Fire, and washeth off our Filth as Water.—Or again it may be understood thus, Except a Man be renewed by the Efficacy of the Holy Ghost cleansing the inward Man from Sin, as Water cleanseth the outward Man from Filth, he shall never enter into Heaven.—Regeneration is a Change of the whole Man in every Part and Faculty thereof, from a State of sinful Nature to a State of supernatural Grace, whereby the Image of God that we defaced and lost by our first Transgression, is again in some good Measure restored.—Regeneration restores us to that Part of God's Image that consists in holy and spiritual Habits, that rectifies the Operations of our natural Faculties and Powers. The Mind is illuminated with true Knowledge, the Will is made compliant to God's Will, and the Affections are called off from the Pursuit of Vanity, and set upon spiritual and heavenly Objects; and this is that Image of God that is drawn upon our Souls in our Regeneration, whereby we are made like to God, yea, so like to him, that the Apostle in *1 Pet. ii. 4.* calls it, *a Participation of the Divine Nature.*—

Nicodemus being convinced of Christ's extraordinary Mission by the Miracles that he wrought, courts him with Terms full of

of humble Respect, *Rabbi*, says he, *thou art a Teacher come from God, for no Man can do these Miracles that thou dost, except God be with him*; to this our Saviour answers more pertinent to his Salvation than to his † *Charesis*, *Except a Man be born again he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*: As if he should say, The Miracles that I do prove my Mission that I am sent of God, but I do greater Miracles than any thou hast seen or heard of; thou hast heard perhaps that I restore Sight to those that are blind, and Life to those that are dead; but I am come to give Eyes to those that do already see, and to give Life to those that do already live; I am come to cause those that are already born to be born again, and this is a Miracle that must be wrought upon thee, and upon all that shall be saved, to turn Flesh into Spirit, to fashion Lumps of Clay into the glorious Similitude of the Image of God; this is the greatest of all Miracles, and this great Miracle must be wrought upon all, for except this be done, says our Saviour, no Man can enter into Heaven.

The Words contain in them, first, a general Proposition, *A Man cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. Secondly, an exceptive Limitation added to this general Proposition, *Except a Man be born again*; and both these do deliver to us this Proposition or doctrinal Observation: That Regeneration, or the New-Birth is of absolute Necessity unto eternal Life.

There is no other Change simply necessary but only this; If thou art poor, thou may'st so continue, and yet be saved; if thou art despised, thou may'st so continue, and yet be saved; if thou art unlearned, thou may'st continue so and yet be saved; only one Change is necessary, if thou art wicked and ungodly, and continuest so, Christ who hath the Keys of Heaven, who shutteth and no Man openeth, hath himself doomed thee, that thou shalt in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. This is also definitively pronounced by the Apostle *Heb. xii. 14. Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*.

In the Prosecution of this Doctrine, I shall first give you some Demonstration of it and then apply it.

Very difficult it is to persuade Men against the Prejudices of their corrupt Hearts; this great Change, say they, is more than needs: Regeneration begins now to be derided by as great Masters in *Israel* as ever *Nicodemus* was; many understand

† Compliment or kind Salutation.

stand not to what End the Fabrick of corrupt Nature should be demolished, and Men as it were turned out of themselves ; they think, if they are but baptized, whereby, as they suppose, the Guilt of Original Sin is washed away, and that a sober religious Life, keeping from gross actual Sins, is sufficient for the obtaining of Heaven without those hard and inexplicable Notions of Regeneration and the New-Birth. I shall therefore endeavour to convince you of the indispensable Necessity that there is of being born again, that so when you are persuaded of it, you may give no Rest to yourselves, nor unto God, till he cause his Spirit, which is that Wind that bloweth where it listeth, to breathe spiritual Life into you, without which it is impossible that you should inherit eternal Life.

First, therefore consider, There is an Identity or Sameness betwixt Grace and Glory, and therefore it is that Regeneration is so necessary to Salvation. What is that illustrious Thing that we call the Glory of Heaven ? Is it that we shall outshine the Brightness of the Sun ? Or, that we shall tread on a Pavement of Stars ? Is it a Freedom from Diseases, Pains, and Death ? Is it that we shall hear the Melody and Songs of Saints and Angels ? These Things indeed and whatever the Heart of Man can desire or imagine to be excellent, do fill up this blessed Estate ; but yet that which chiefly constitutes Heaven is Holiness, that very Holiness that wicked Men, who yet presumptuously hope to inherit Heaven, do yet despise and hate on Earth. We shall there be united to God by Love, depend on him by Faith, obey him with Delight, and that with the very same Love, Faith, and Delight, as we do here on Earth ; only these Graces shall then be exalted above all Imperfections and Frailties, this is the Glory of Heaven. The Glory of God himself consists especially in his infinite Holiness, and therefore in that most triumphant Song of *Moses* in *Exod* xv. 11. God is stiled glorious in Holiness, fearful in Praises ; but glorious in Holiness ; why now the Glory of the Saints in Heaven is but a Reflection cast upon them from the Glory of God, and therefore as he is especially glorious in Holiness, so are they also glorious in their Holiness. Why now if Grace and Glory be the very same thing, canst thou, O Sinner, ever hope for Glory without Grace ? Or is not this the Heaven that thou dost desire and hope for ? Is it a Place of Ease and Pleasure only that thou wishest, where thou may'st be free from Cares and Fears, from Sor-

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rows and sad Hours ? Why this is impossible, such a Heaven God never made, nor canst thou in Reason expect, for God hath so linked Sin and the Curse together, that Heaven itself would be no Sanctuary to thee from the Regrets and Stingings of Conscience, nor from the Horror and ghastly Fear of Wrath, if Sin and Guilt shall enter there with thee.

Secondly, Unregenerate Men are utterly unsuitable to this State of Glory, and therefore there must necessarily intervene this great Change of Regeneration.—There are none admitted to be free Citizens of the new *Jerusalem*, but only such who have first served out their Time of Holiness, some more, some fewer Years here on Earth ; the Work of Heaven must be learned in the Time of our Apprenticeship on Earth.—I speak all this to convince wicked Men how weak, vain, and foolish a Thing it is for them to hope for Happiness without endeavouring after this great Change ; Misery pursues them even to Heaven itself, and they would not be happy even there. Certain it is, God never bestows Heaven upon any, but beforehand he makes them agreeable to its Holiness by their own.—Well therefore, as ever you hope for Heaven, and I dare assure myself that this is the Hope of all of you, make sure then to yourselves this great Change ; it is no Notion that I have now preached unto you, your Natures and your Lives must be changed, or believe it, you will be found at the last Day under the Wrath of God, for God will not change or alter the Word that is gone out of his Mouth, he hath said it, Christ who is the Truth and Word of God hath pronounced it, that without this New-Birth or Regeneration, no Man shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

Thirdly, Whatsoever a Man doth in a State of Unregeneracy is Sin, and therefore the Change of Regeneration is absolutely necessary unto eternal Life.—The Principle from whence all the Actions of an unregenerate Man flows is corrupt, and when the Fountain is corrupt, the Streams also that issue from thence must needs be tainted. That Principle that is necessarily required to make our Actions to be truly good and holy is the sincere and superlative Love of God. What we do becomes then a good Action when we do it from the commanding Motive of divine Love ; and therefore our Saviour saith in *John xiv. 24* *He that loveth me not keepeth not my Sayings.* Our whole Duty consisteth either in that which immediately

mediately respects Man ; and accordingly God hath comprised the whole Law in two Tables, in the one he prescribes the Services due to himself, and in the other he requires from us what is due to Men, and both these are fulfilled by Love ; so saith the Apostle *Rom. xiii. 10. Love is the fulfilling of the Law* ; and therefore our Saviour reduceth all the Ten Commandments into Two, in *Mat. xxiii. 37, 38, 39. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might* : This is the first Commandment, and the second is like unto it, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself*. Our Saviour reduceth all into Two, and these Two speak but one and the same Thing, Love, which is the fulfilling of the Commandment. Now this teacheth us, that whatever external Conformity our Actions may carry in them to the Letter of the Law, yet are they not true Obedience to God's Commandments, if they flow not from a Principle of Love. Tho' you may perform each particular Duty required in each particular Command, yet this is not fulfilling but transgressing of the Law, if what we do is not done out of a Principle of divine Love ; this is that universal Qualification that can alone make our Duties truly good and acceptable unto God ; so that either to do contrary to the Law, or to do Actions that the Law requires without Love to God are both of them Sins, the one against the expresse Letter, and the other against the true Sense of the Law. Now no unregenerate Man can act any Thing from this divine Principle of the Love of God, for this is implanted in us only by Regeneration, and therefore it is said 1 *John iv. 7. Every one that loveth is born of God*.

The only Way that leads to Heaven and Happiness is Faith and good Works ; not such equivocal good Works as most Men rely upon, but such genuine ones as have the Love of God for their Principle, and the Glory of God for their End ; and such no unregenerate Man can produce, all the rest are but Trash and Lumber, and such as will rather burthen then crown your Souls at the last Day.—

Heaven in Scripture is promised to be given by way of Inheritance, and no otherwise : So you have it in *Acts xx. 32*. and in *Acts xxvi. 18*. and in many other Places. Now an Inheritance denotes Sonship ; and God will not give that Inheritance unto any but to those that are his own Children. We are all of us naturally Strangers to God, and before we
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can become his Children we must be new born, and by this New-Birth it is that we are made Heirs of Glory, and Co-heirs with Jesus Christ our Elder Brother, and therefore Regeneration is absolutely necessary unto eternal Salvation.—

The Will of an unregenerate Man usually is very irrational. He would obtain the End, but yet he will not use the Means; Grace he would willingly have, but you cannot bring his averse Will to close with the Performance of those unpleasing and irksome Duties wherein God usually bestows Grace. Could they be holy with a Wish, and suddenly metamorphosed to other Men, none should be better Christians than themselves; Could they enter into Heaven by being willing to have it, none should shine higher in Glory than they; but when so much hard and unpleasing Work must be done first, that they may be regenerate, and then after that they are regenerate to perfect them for Glory, they look upon these Things at a great Distance and afar off, and so they sit down with idle Wishes far short of Grace and Glory.—

To escape the Pollutions of the World is no Argument of the Truth of Grace, unless yourselves also are cleansed from the Pollutions of your own Hearts; for Sins may be left merely from external forced Principles, such as are the Terrors of Conscience, or the heavy Judgments of God.—Men may gather up their loose and dissolute Lives within the Compass of Civility and moral Honesty, and yet they may be utter Strangers to a Work of true and saving Grace; and this may be ascribed to two Grounds, partly to the Convictions of God's Spirit awakenning natural Conscience to see the Horror, and to foresee the Danger that is in such infamous Sins; and partly to Prudence, that they have gained from the frequent Experiences that they have had, of the manifold Inconveniences that they brought upon themselves by such Sins formerly. These two may make a great Amendment in Men's Lives and Conversations, and yet both these, Convictions and Prudence, fall short of true regenerating Grace.—A Man may discourse of spiritual Mysteries copiously and clearly; he may have Gifts of Knowledge and utterance; he may preach with Evidence and Demonstration, and pray with Enlargement and Affection, and yet notwithstanding all this, be an utter Stranger to a saving Work of Grace.—

But,

But, it will be expedient briefly to premise something concerning the Manner of obtaining Assurance of Grace, by the Signs and Characters of Grace.

In the first Place therefore, it is possible for a Christian to attain an assured Knowledge of his Regeneration. I say, an assured Knowledge, to carry it higher than the Papists do, that allow no more than a conjectural Probability, which may well enough preserve from Despair, but yet doth not exclude all Fears and Doubtings: But it is no wonder that they that will not trust their natural Senses in the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, should not much less trust their spiritual Senses in the Doctrine of Assurance. A Christian's Assurance is many Degrees above these weak Guesses, and arrives at a far greater Certainty than any Demonstration can be; for the Evidence of Sense and Reason is not so clear as that of Assurance is: That Testimony that Sense and Reason gives is but human, but the Testimony given in a Christian's Assurance is divine, and therefore is far more certain, and more infallible. The Apostle groundeth the Evidence of Assurance upon the Divinity of the Witness, in *Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit itself* (mark that) *beareth witness with our Spirits that we are the Children of God.* The Spirit itself beareth witness, and what God speaks is infinitely more certain than that which our very Eyes see; and therefore it is very injurious to his Truth and Veracity, when he by the secret and sweet Whisperings of his Spirit informs the Soul that it is in a State of Grace, to think that this Testimony only gives probable Guesses and Conjectures.

The Witness that the Spirit gives is such a full Assurance as removes all Doubts and Fears, for it is the Witness of God himself. Now such a Witness as this is a Christian may have and therefore it is possible, and it necessarily follows also that he may have a full Assurance beyond all doubts and Fears; nor is this possible by way of Revelation, as a specious Priviledge indulged only to some few, and them the choicest of God's Servants, for in *2 Pet. i. 10.* the Apostle exhorts all Christians, to give Diligence to make their Callings and Elections sure, which he would never do were it an Impossibility, and could not be obtained with our Diligence; so in *2* Cor. xiii. 5.* *Examine yourselves,* says the Apostle, *whether ye be in the Faith; prove yourselves; know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you except you be Reprobates.* Reprobation in this Place,

Place, by the Way doth not stand opposed to the Decree of Election, as if none were elected but those that were already actually in Christ, but it stands opposed to Approbation, for God doth not approve of any in whom Christ is not formed ; *Now, says the Apostle, since you know this, try and prove yourselves whether Christ be in you.*

But it were a vain Thing to put a Christian upon Self-examination and Trial, if there were no ordinary Means to attain to the Knowledge of it, but he must expect and depend upon some extraordinary Revelation from Heaven, a Thing that is never but rarely given unto some few. It is true, among Christians some may not have this Assurance at all, and none have at all Times. As in a Walk that is shaded with Trees, and chequer'd with Light and Shadow, some Tracts and Paths in it are dark, and others are Sun-shine : Such is usually the Life of the most assured Christian, sometimes he walks in the Light of God's Countenance, and rejoices in the Smiles of his Favour, and at other Times he walks in Darkness, and can see no Light, he steps out of the bright Manifestations of God's Love into the Umbrages of sad and cloudy Apprehensions concerning his present State of Grace, and his future State of Glory ; so that some Christians never have any full Assurance at all, and no Christian hath this full Assurance at all Times. Now this Inequality of Assurance proceeds from a double Cause : First, Sometimes from the free and various Dispensations of the Spirit who is arbitrary in his Workings, who is that Wind that bloweth when and where he pleaseth : For the Treasures as well of Comfort, as of Grace, are in his Hand ; as the Sun disposeth to the Soul its Summer and Winter Days according to its Approaches to, or Recesses from it. Secondly, Sometimes it ariseth from new contracted Guilt that blots our Evidences, and makes them illegible till it be taken off again. It is frequent with Christians when they have done sinfully or hypocritically in one particular Instance, then they begin to question all their Sincerity, and upon the Prevalence of one Corruption to doubt of the Truth of all their Graces. We do not therefore affirm, that there is in all, or may be in any at all Times this full Assurance, but in some there is, and in all there is Ground for it, and a Possibility by Diligence to attain it ; give Diligence to make your Callings and Elections sure, that's the first Thing.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Marks and Signs of our Regeneration in which the Scripture abounds, are of themselves insufficient to raise us to a full Assurance without the Testimony of the holy Spirit of God. This I doubt not but appears very clear to those who have taken Pains to search out their spiritual Estate by Marks and Signs; if the Spirit comes not in to satisfy them by his own Witness, they may soon run themselves to a Loss, and at the End set down as doubtful and perplex'd as when they first begun. As for Instance, if a gracious Soul should call into question the Truth and Sincerity of his Love to God, and should begin to examine himself; how shall I know whether I do indeed love God? Why the Scripture tells me, by keeping his Commandments, by obeying him sincerely; yea, but the Sincerity of our Obedience is as difficult to be known as the Sincerity of our Love, and how shall I know whether my Obedience be sincere? Now here, though many Signs might be given as Evidences of this, yet still the doubting Soul will be driving of itself from one Sign to another, and never find Satisfaction in any of them, unless the Spirit of God comes in by its undeniable Witness to silence all its Objections, and to resolve all its Doubts by a kind of peremptory and dispassionate Voice that it is so, otherwise there is no End of looking after Signs, for they will still leave the Soul full of Perplexities; unless the Spirit of God comes in as a satisfactory Witness, we may run from one Sign to another Sign to enquire after Grace whether it be there and there, and when all is done we may be as much at a Loss concerning the Grace which we enquired after: And there are two Reasons why Signs of Grace without the Testimony of the Spirit cannot work in us a full and absolute Assurance.

First, Because usually one Grace is the Sign of another. Signs of Grace are Graces themselves, and therefore, stand in need to be evidenced by other Signs, and them Signs being Graces too, do stand in need to be evidenced by others, and so we should run to an *Infinitem*, unless the Spirit of God by his Witness puts a Stop to this Search.

Secondly, Because most of the Signs and Evidences of true Grace may be so exactly counterfeited by Hypocrites, that the Judgment that we pass upon ourselves by these alone, will still leave place for perplexing Doubts and Fears, lest all our Graces, and all our Signs of them too, should be but hypocritical Deceptions. So then unto a full Assurance there is necessarily re-

quired an inward peremptory Witness of the Holy Ghost: Signs and Marks without his infallible Testimony are insignificant and unsatisfactory Things.

Thirdly, That Assurance that Christians have of their Regeneration, is not wrought in them merely by the Testimony of the Spirit without the Help of Signs and Marks. As Marks and Signs cannot raise up to a full Assurance without the Spirit of God, so neither do we obtain a full Assurance merely by the Testimony of the Spirit without the Help of Signs and Marks; for to what End doth the Scripture so much abound in giving Characters of Men's States, which is the main Scope and Drift of the whole first Epistle of St. *John*, these were all superfluous, if the usual Way of the Spirit's evidencing were without them. I am regenerated, but how come I to be assured of this? Not barely because the Spirit testifies to me that I am so: That looks too much like Enthusiasm, and a wild and groundless Delusion; but the Spirit proceeds in a more rational Way, I am a Christian and regenerated, because I find those Marks upon me that can belong to none, but to such who are so. Indeed all our Assurance must be ultimately resolved into the alone Verdict of the Spirit of God, and that without the Help of further Signs and Marks; for when a Christian gains Assurance, he doth not, with the Sun, run through all the Signs of the *Zodiack* to know if he be a Christian by this and this Sign, and then to try the Truth of that Sign by another, and that other by a Third, and so onward, that were endless and unsatisfactory: But when he is brought to Signs that lie a Remove or two off from the Grace that he enquires after, he doth not usually make a farther Search whether they be truly in him or not, but the Spirit darts in a clear and heavenly Light that discovers them to him not discourteously only but intuitively, so as that he is able to say they are in me beyond all Deceit.

Fourthly, The usual Way whereby Christians come to be assured of their Regeneration, is, by the joint Testimony both of Marks and Signs of Grace, and also by the Spirit's witnessing to us that these Marks and Signs are in us. The Word and the Spirit are the Twin-lights that discover to us our Condition. And as Mariners presage to themselves a prosperous Voyage when two Lights, *Castor* and *Pollux* appear, but a dangerous Voyage if only one appears: So here it is unsafe in the Trial of our Regeneration to take up with one single
solitary

solitary Light ; but when both the Light of Scripture Marks and Signs, and also of the Spirit's witnessing appear together, we may then properly and happily proceed to a Discovery of ourselves. So in *Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit beareth Witness with our Spirits that we are the Children of God.* To evidence that we are born again there comes in a two-fold Witness, the Witness of our Spirits, and the Witness of God's Spirit ; our Spirit deposeth that we are so, that we are born again, and become the Children of God, and this it doth by observing the proper Marks and Characters that the Scripture gives of a Child of God ; and the Spirit of God comes in as another Witness, that in the Mouth of two Witnesses this may be established, and by his immediate Light clears up the Truth of that Attestation that Conscience did make, which takes away all Doubtings and Hesitations, and fills with a full Assurance, yea, gives us a *Plethory* ; so that still Marks and Signs are of great Use for the Discovery of the Truth of Grace. In *1 John ii. 3. By this we know that we know him if we keep his Commandments* : But still we may be puzzled to know whether our keeping of God's Commandments be such a Ground for our Comfort, therefore the Witness of the Spirit is here required to seal and confirm this unto us, without which still we shall be to seek Assurance for all the Marks that the Scripture lays down for Evidences of our Graces.

These Things I thought fit to premise before I give you any Signs and Marks of Regeneration, that so you may be exhorted and moved when you hear those Signs that the Scripture gives to examine your Hearts whether they are transcribed within you, and also to lift up your Hearts unto God, that his Spirit may dart into you such a spiritual Light and clear Illumination, as may infallibly demonstrate to you that these Marks are indeed in you ; it being the proper Work of one and the same Spirit to work Grace in us, and to manifest it to us ; it is he alone that can draw that Curtain that hangs before it, and gives us a View of it : As it is the Light of the Sun only by which we can see the Sun, so is it the Light of the Spirit only by which we can know the Spirit to be only in us. Let us therefore in the Trial of ourselves look to Marks and Signs for a Testimony in our own Consciences, without which, all our Assurance may well be suspected for Enthusiasm ; and let us also beg the Testimony of the Spirit, without which all Marks and Signs will be but vain and unsatisfactory.

Now to give you some Signs of the Truth of Grace, I shall not insist upon all that might be mentioned, for they are very numerous, since there is no one Grace but it is the Sign of another Grace, yea, the Sign of all other, for all Graces are concomitant, I shall only therefore select out a few.

And the first is this, It is a good Sign of Grace when a Man is willing to search and examine himself whether he be gracious or not. There is a certain kind of Instinct in a Child of God, whereby he naturally desires to have the Title of his Legitimation tried, whereas a Hypocrite dreads nothing more than to have his Rottenness search'd into. *David* therefore prays, *Psal. xxvi. 2. Examine me*, says he, *O Lord, and prove me, try my Reins and my Heart.* God indeed hath many Ways of trying us, but especially by the Word and Ministry. The Scripture is the great Treasury of all spiritual Light; God hath amassed and stored it up all there, and whatever comes with spiritual Illumination upon the Conscience must borrow it from thence; the Preaching of the Word, that is, the darting abroad of those Beams that makes them pierce into the very Intrails of Sinners; and discovers the secret Thoughts and Intents of their Hearts. Now try yourselves by this, do you love the Word of God because it is a searching Word; because it brings home Convictions to you, and shakes your carnal Confidences and Presumptions? Do you love a Soul searching Ministry that ransacks your very Souls, and tells you all that ever you did? Do you delight in a Ministry that forceth you to turn inward upon yourselves, that makes you tremble and look pale at every Word for fear it should be the Sentence of your Damnation? This is a Sign that your Condition is good, because you are so willing to be searched. *He that doth Evil*, saith our Saviour, *John iii. 20. hateth the Light, neither cometh he to it lest his Deeds should be reprov'd.* But if you are pleas'd only with a formal, general Ministry, and such Prophets as sing only pleasant Songs to you, such as never touch'd the Conscience to the Quick; that keep aloof off, and instead of brandishing the Word that is sharper than a two-edged Sword, reaving the Heart with it, they only make a Flourish of it; if you can brook no other but such a quiet unconcerning Ministry as this is, this is a bad Sign that yet you are unsound. *A Thief hateth the Light*, says our Saviour, *lest he should be detected and discovered;* so a hypocritical Professor hateth that a Beam of spiritual Light by the Ministry

of the Word should break in upon his Conscience to shew how rotten and unsound he is ; and that's the first Trial : It is a Sign of a good Estate when a Man is willing to put himself on the Trial.

Secondly, Love to those who are truly godly, is a certain and infallible Sign of Regeneration, 1 *John* iii. 18. *We know that we are passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren.* This is a certain Sign a mighty Change is wrought on the Heart ; for naturally we are inclin'd to hate the Children of God upon that very Account because they are godly. It is a Rule of the Schoolmen borrowed out of *Aristotle*, that the Affections of the Soul are the same towards the Image of a Thing as they are towards the Thing itself. If we love or hate any Person we shall accordingly love or hate his Picture and Resemblance. Now all wicked Men naturally hate God because he is a holy God, and thereby is contrary to their very Natures that are corrupt and sinful, and so they also hate the Children of God because they are living Pictures of God, and bear his Image upon them, being made conformable to him by a Work of Regeneration. *He that is born of the Flesh*, says the Apostle, *will persecute and hate him that is born after the Spirit*, because he is the Copy of that Original betwixt whom and them there is an Antipathy founded in their very Natures. Now when a Man who before did thus hate, scorn, and despise the People of God as a Company of affected and turbulent Hypocrites, shall find in himself a Love and Esteem for them ; and shall see the Beauty and Glory of that Holiness that before render'd them odious to them ; this is a Sign that certainly a mighty Change is wrought upon that Man, and that he himself is transformed into the Image of God, because he loves that Image in others. Now this Trial will proceed upon these two or three Particulars.

First, That this Love be to them because they are godly. We may possibly love godly Men for other Respects, because they are wise or learned, or because possibly they love us, or are related to us ; but these are but By-respects, and Grace hath no Interest at all in them. That Love to the Godly that can assure us of being godly and regenerate, must be a Love to the Children of God merely because they are godly.

Secondly, As we must love them because they are godly, so the more godly they are the more we should love them. *My Delight*, says *David*, *is in the Saints, and in the excellent ones of the*

the Earth. The more holy a Child of God is, if we love him aright, the more we shall love him.

Thirdly, If we love all that are godly; not only those of our Temper, Constitution, and Opinion in all Things, but all of them, with a Valuation and Esteem for them; with a prizing Love, which the Image of God upon their Souls, and their Similitude to him challengeth; indeed our Familiarity and Intimacy may be with some of them more than with others, but our high and cordial Esteem must be all of them.

Now try yourselves by this, Do you love the Brethren? And so little truly is this Love to be found, that the Name of Brethren is become a Mock and a Jest by many; But is your Delight in the Saints? Do you account them the excellent Ones of the Earth? How few are there that love them that love God? Or if they do love them, it is possibly for other Respects and Reasons; Could you not love them better if they were not so rigid, strict and precise as they are? Let such know as St. John speaks in 1 John v. 1. *He that loveth him that begetteth, loveth him also that is begotten.* It is in vain to think that we are born of God, if we have not a sincere and cordial Affection for all those that are Children of God, and our Brethren.

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